

S T A T E M E N T
OF THE
SERVICES
OF
S I R S T A M F O R D R A F F L E S.

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Nov. 1824.



TO
THE HONOURABLE THE COURT OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
EAST-INDIA COMPANY,

HONOURABLE SIRS:

DURING my voyage home in the *Mariner*, on board which vessel I embarked at Bencoolen in April last, after the loss of the *Fame*, I employed myself, at such intervals as my health would permit, in drawing out a statement of my services, from the period of my nomination, in the year 1810, as Agent to the Governor-General with the Malay states, to that of my relinquishing charge of the Company's affairs in Sumatra.

My object in preparing such a document was twofold.

It was extremely doubtful whether I should live to reach my native land again; and I was anxious, in the event of my death, to

leave in the possession of my family and friends, a record which should show the extent and nature of my public services, and the principles I had acted upon, in the prosecution of the various important measures which grew out of the responsible stations I had filled.

Another motive was, that of ensuring to my surviving family some consideration at the hands of your Honourable Court with reference to my losses and sufferings, on grounds, not merely confined to the last disaster which had nearly closed our earthly career, but connected with a series of events which entailed upon me pecuniary sacrifices, to a considerable extent. It has, contrary to expectation, pleased Providence to spare my life, and I have been permitted to present a short address to your Honourable Court, briefly alluding to the grounds upon which I have presumed to claim your liberal consideration of my case.

I have reason to believe, that in the judgment of some honourable Members, I should have done better to have confined my representation simply to the losses which I have suffered by the destruction of the ship *Fame*. ✓

I feel, however, bound in candour to your Honourable Court, to state, that I do not presume to claim consideration at your hands simply on account of those losses, however deeply I have reason to deplore them.

It is upon a review of my services, together with the other grounds, that I respectfully present myself to your notice; and I
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indulge a confident hope, that when those services are adverted to, they will have their due weight, in the decision which your Honourable Court may be pleased to pass upon my case.

It is true, that the policy of some of my measures has been questioned, and that others were condemned : but there is nothing in the character or consequences of those measures that should make me shun inquiry, or which should justly induce your Honourable Court to withhold from me that acknowledgment, which, on a liberal review of my services generally, I trust, they may be found to merit. In some instances, my zeal may have overstepped my prudence ; in others, my judgment may not have been equal to the exigency of the moment. But it is to be recollected, that it has been my lot to occupy situations of great difficulty, and to act, for the most part, on my own responsibility. However much I may have erred in my political views (and it is in these, almost exclusively, that I have been exposed to reproof), or occasionally overstepped the limits of my authority, it must be admitted, that the situations in which I was placed were novel and unprecedented, whether considered with reference to the administration of Java, or to the more recent struggle in which I became involved with the Dutch ; and that, while I pursued throughout one unvarying purpose of upholding the honour and interests of my country, and benefiting, to the utmost of my power, the countries and people placed under my authority, at the risk of all
personal

personal considerations, the result has, in a public point of view, proved no less creditable to the national character, than the establishment of Singapore has proved advantageous to our commercial interests in that quarter of the world.

I trust, therefore, that in making this appeal, and expressing a hope that these claims will be recognized, it will not be considered that I exceed what is incumbent on my public character, or what a high and honourable mind is naturally led to expect and value.

My services may be considered under the three following heads, *viz.*

Java,
Sumatra, and
Singapore.

JAVA.

IN the year 1810, when the expedition was in progress for the reduction of the Isles of France and Bourbon, the attention of the Supreme Government in Bengal was directed to the conquest of Java. The annexation of Holland to France, placed virtually at the disposal of the latter power the valuable and extensive possessions belonging to the Dutch in the Eastern Seas : possessions as important to Holland as those on the continent of India are to Great-Britain.

France

France looked to Java, as the point from whence her operations might be most successfully directed, not only against our political ascendancy in the East, but likewise against our commercial interests, both abroad and at home.

Its subjugation, therefore, became more important each succeeding day. I had been enabled to submit various plans and information to the late Earl Minto, then Governor-General of India, which tended materially to promote the arrangement and course of operations; and his Lordship was pleased to mark the sense he entertained of my services, by nominating me his Agent with the Malay States, in which capacity I proceeded to the settlement of Malacca, there to make further arrangements for, and await the arrival of the expedition. In the month of June 1811, the fleet, consisting of upwards of ninety sail, reached Malacca. I may state the fact, I trust, without the imputation of vanity, that very considerable difference of opinion existed, as to the route which should be pursued towards Java. I had, however, taken the precaution to ascertain the most expeditious and safe course. It was followed with success; and in less than six weeks after quitting Malacca, the fleet was in sight of Batavia, without accident to a single vessel.

The records of the day have fully detailed the operations which took place, and the final accomplishment of the object.

Batavia

Batavia surrendered to the British arms; and in announcing the event to the Authorities at home, Lord Minto, in his dispatch to the Earl of Liverpool, used the following emphatic language, with reference to the importance of the conquest.

“ An empire, which for two centuries had contributed greatly to
 “ the power, prosperity, and grandeur of one of the principal and
 “ most respected states of Europe, has thus been wrested from
 “ the short usurpation of the French Government, added to the
 “ dominions of the British Crown, and converted from a seat of
 “ hostile machination and commercial competition, into an aug-
 “ mentation of British power and prosperity.”

It was to the government of that empire that my Noble Patron nominated me, “as an acknowledgment of the services” his Lordship was pleased to consider I had rendered, “and in
 “ consideration of my peculiar fitness for the office.”

The charge was of the most extensive, arduous, and responsible nature, comprising on the island of Java alone, a population of six millions, divided into thirty residencies, under powerful chiefs, who had been long desirous of throwing off the European yoke, and who were consequently by no means disposed to submit quietly to the rule of their new governors.

It would be necessary for me to enter, at far greater length than is either judicious or expedient, on the present occasion, were

were I to attempt to detail the policy which governed the Dutch in the administration of their eastern colonies, antecedent to their falling into our hands.

Java.

Moreover, the subject is one which must be divested of the interest which was necessarily attached to it when that event took place: and I cannot but feel, in adverting to this head of my representation, that I labour under the disadvantage of having to solicit attention to topics which, so far from creating pleasing reflections, recall the unwelcome fact, of our having, at a moment when the brilliant events in Europe engrossed the undivided attention of the Authorities at home, unconditionally relinquished interests which are universally acknowledged to be of the utmost importance to our commerce with India and China.

It is, however, essential to advert very briefly to one or two of the leading principles, in order to shew the lamentable effects which they produced, and the consequent difficulty and embarrassment I had to contend with: causes to which are mainly to be attributed my recall from the government, at a time when there was a prospect of the benefits anticipated from the changes introduced being realized.

One, and the principal source of revenue, was the monopoly by Government of the grain and other produce of the land, which the cultivators were required to deliver, at an inadequate and arbitrary rate, and which articles were afterwards dealt out to the

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consumer

consumer at a far higher rate ; so that, in fact, the whole body of the people depended upon Government for their very subsistence. The principle of encouraging industry in the cultivation and improvement of the country, by creating an interest in the effort and fruits of that industry, was wholly unknown.

The mode of collecting this revenue in kind remained with the Regent of the district, leaving the cultivators no security beyond the claims of usage and custom : and although custom prescribed a certain portion only of the crop to be delivered, there were no positive means of preventing a greater levy ; and while the power and influence of authority could be successfully exerted to stifle complaints, the peasant, though suffering the greatest injustice, despairing of relief, would endure almost any privation and suffering, rather than quit the land of his forefathers, to which he felt himself attached by the strongest ties of religion, of habit, and of affection. Feudal service was another of the grievances and oppressions under which the natives groaned. No means existed of affording a direct controul on the demands for labour. The public officers of the Dutch Government universally employed the services of the people without regular hire. These demands were unlimited. The native chiefs followed the same system. No check existed ; and thus the energies of the people were crushed, and their labour frittered away, becoming neither productive to themselves nor to the state. In short, they

were

were reduced to the lowest state of vassalage and subjection. To Java.
 this ruinous system was to be added the pressure arising from the failure of external commerce.

The Government, forced to look within itself for relief, discovered the embarrassments to be daily increasing. Under this exigency, the funds of public societies were appropriated to the Government treasury, and the private property of individuals was forcibly borrowed in the same manner. An arbitrary increase of paper-currency was issued, to provide for the daily expenses of the state; and this being found inadequate, the Government were compelled to deliver a proportion of colonial produce in payment of their establishments, or in other words, to pawn the produce in store, to satisfy the current demands upon the public treasury.

Such was the financial state of Java at the period when I succeeded to its government.

The distress of the colony was excessive; and one of the articles earnestly solicited by General Jansens, on capitulating to our arms, was, that the currency of the several kinds of paper money which had been created by the Government, and in circulation, should be recognized and continued.

Anxious as Lord Minto was to relieve the distress, he declined to accede to a request, which, if complied with, would have created incalculable embarrassment to his own Government. A modified relief was, however, agreed to, in a great measure from

feelings of compassion and policy, and paper currency, to the extent of eight millions and a half of rix-dollars, was so far recognized by the British Government, that in all transactions between individuals, or between individuals and Government, the offer to pay a demand, partly in silver and partly in paper, at a fixed rate (*viz.* six and a half rix-dollars for one Spanish dollar), was to be considered as a legal tender ! Numbers were thus saved from misery and ruin ; but the advantages contemplated were never realized.

Scarcely had the Governor-General withdrawn from Java, and Sir Samuel Auchmuty, with a considerable portion of the army, returned to India, when the colony became unavoidably involved in hostilities with the treacherous Chief of Palembang, and the faithless Sultan of Djojocarta. The expenses of these inevitable expeditions tended greatly to aggravate the distress of the island. Drafts on Bengal became the only resource ; for no means existed with which to pay the troops, or to discharge the current outlay of the Government. It was under these embarrassing circumstances that it became necessary to devise measures for the future relief of the colony. Immediate means were to be derived from the Indian treasuries alone ; and notwithstanding the injunctions which had been laid upon the local Government, to abstain from such a measure, the retention of Java actually depended upon the prompt supply which such calls met with.

One

One of the principal measures which became necessary, Jaya.
 was the introduction of an improved system of internal management, and the establishment of a land rental on the island, which the important political arrangements I had made with the native princes, and the confidence which was early shewn in our government, enabled me to effect.

The nature of this change, the principles on which the new order of things was to be established, and the manner and time of bringing it about, required, however, the most serious consideration ; and previously to taking any step in the new organization, statistical inquiries were instituted in every district, and the most detailed information collected in every department. For the extent, nature, and importance of the information thus obtained on the existing state of the country, on its population and resources, and of the European and native administrations, I refer to the detailed reports on the public records, and to my minutes and dispatches ; which last convey a summary of the results, and a general view of the grounds on which I considered a thorough change in system not only advisable and practicable, but indispensable, no less for our own interests and honour, than for the happiness and prosperity of the country at large.

The result of the change, when effected, fully equalled the highest expectations and estimates which had been formed of its success. Not a single individual, high or low, felt aggrieved by
 it ;

Java. it; and the native population, chiefs, subordinates, and people, with one accord hailed the new order of things, as a boon conferred upon them by British philanthropy, and entered on the enjoyment of its advantages with confidence and an improving industry. Cultivation and commerce rapidly extended in every direction; and, finally, in lieu of the contingents and arbitrary exactions of the European Government, a fixed and permanent money revenue was derived, direct from the land, and afforded the means of defraying the expenses of the public establishments with regularity and certainty, instead of leaving the Government dependant on the state of a foreign market, for the irregular and uncertain sale of its colonial produce.

In connexion with this important change, a general survey was made of nearly the whole island, and detailed surveys of the lands attached to each village and cultivator, were proceeded upon to a considerable extent in most of the districts; while a body of statistics, probably more complete than we possess regarding any other part of India, was collected and arranged, as well for the present use of the Government as for historical reference hereafter.

I believe I may state it as a fact, that although the Dutch possessed Java for nearly two centuries, no scientific map, whatever, was formed of the island; and the only one extant is that which was framed when I was there.

With

With regard to the other measures of my administration, I will merely notice two or three which strike me at the moment as calculated to throw light on my government, and the extent and nature of the charge ; leaving it to those who are acquainted with the difficulties and responsibilities of Government under ordinary circumstances, to estimate the degree in which those difficulties and responsibilities must have been increased, under the circumstances in which I was placed. Java.

In the judicial department and police, independently of the regulations for the interior of the country, which formed part of the revenue and judicial system, as it affected the native inhabitants, essential reforms became necessary in the several European courts of justice and in the magistracy, established at Batavia, Samarang, and Sourabaya ; and while I had the satisfaction to introduce trial by jury, a clear and simple code was compiled under my authority, containing the rules for the different courts, and instructions for their offices. A reference to this volume, which was printed in English and Dutch, will shew that the practice of the former courts was revised and modified on the mild and just principles of the British constitution : and the fact of its still continuing in force under the Dutch Government, will be a sufficient proof that it was applicable to the circumstances of the settlement. It would be needless to dwell on the research, labour, and caution, which such an undertaking required.

Among

Java.

Among the several laws and regulations which were established during our government, it should not be forgotten, that the act of the British Parliament, declaring the slave trade to be felony, was made a colonial law, and that it cannot even now be repealed without express authority from the mother country that the whole of the slaves were registered, according to the forms required for our West-Indian islands ; and that nothing but political circumstances, and the restrictions under which I was placed by a higher authority, prevented me from virtually abolishing for ever this dreadful evil throughout the whole of the Dutch possessions. I had obtained the concurrence of the leading inhabitants who possessed slaves, to the adoption of measures for this purpose, when on communicating them to the Governor-General in Council, I found that authority averse to their adoption, pending the decision of the question whether Java was to be permanently administered by the King or the Company.

Shortly after this restriction, the face of public affairs entirely changed in Europe ; the Dutch colonies were to be restored without reserve, and without any condition in favour of this unfortunate class of beings, and all I could do was to establish a society, termed “ the *Java Benevolent Society*,” in the hope of interesting our successors in the object.

I will only further observe, that the whole of the Dutch paper currency, before alluded to, amounting to nearly nine millions, was
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withdrawn from circulation, and that so much of the public debt of the Government was, in consequence, thus destroyed and annulled; and that, in addition to the Cadoe and other provinces ceded to the British Government by the Native Princes, other important and valuable provinces in the eastern part of the island, and which had been sold by Marshal Daendells to Chinese for upwards of a million of dollars, were repurchased, and their revenues again brought into the public treasury.

With regard to the Out-settlements, I will only notice three, to which my attention was more particularly directed. Those in the island of Borneo; that formed under my government on the island of Banca; and the residency of Japan.

On the first I will simply state, that the measures adopted with reference to this great and important island, had in view the opening its ports to general commerce, and the final establishment of the British influence in Borneo, as far as might be necessary for securing that object. The Dutch, previous to the conquest of Java, had relinquished all title to interfere; and had it been an object with the British Government, the command of the whole of that great island was placed entirely at our disposal. By recent accounts, it appears that the Dutch, fully appreciating the vast and productive field which Borneo presents, have established themselves throughout that island.

Banca

Java.

Banca having been ceded expressly to the British Government, it was not possible to foresee that it would as expressly be again ceded by us to the Dutch. Its administration was, therefore, conducted entirely on the principle of its being permanently British. The island was regularly surveyed, with the view of ascertaining the real extent of its resources ; a mineralogical map was framed by a scientific officer ; and the most detailed information collected, by means of a commission specially appointed for the purpose. In one year, upwards of seventeen hundred Chinese labourers were brought from China for the mines, and the island was rapidly advancing in importance and resources.

With respect to Japan, I need only state that I was fortunate enough to open an intercourse with that country, and to submit to the Authorities at home important information regarding its resources, and in particular, the means by which we might gain admission to a trade with it ; and that I feel perfectly satisfied, had the measures which I recommended been adopted with promptness and ability, the latter object would have been effected. So far, indeed, was I convinced in my own mind of the practicability of the measure, that notwithstanding I held the reins of the general government at Batavia, I offered my own services to proceed in person to Japan, with the view of accomplishing it : a proceeding which nothing but the importance of the undertaking, and

and an almost certain conviction of its success, was likely to have called for or warranted on my part. A reference to the proceedings of the Governor-General in Council will show the grounds on which that authority was inclined to think that no advantage was to be gained by opening the trade with Japan, and to discourage the attempt; and when the decision of the Authorities at home, which was in favour of it, reached me in Java, the Dutch possessions had already been transferred by the convention to their former masters, and this change in the state of affairs precluded all further measures on my part.

It is with feelings of satisfaction I reflect that, during the administration of Lord Minto in Bengal, the whole of my measures met with the approbation of the Supreme Government. No sooner, however, had his Lordship quitted India, than the machinations of an officer standing high in military character, who had been associated with me in the Government, towards whom I had invariably preserved the most marked attention, and from whom I had reason to look for better things, poisoned the ear of the eminent nobleman who succeeded my lamented patron in the seat of Government at Calcutta; and, by insinuations as base as they were false, placed me before the Bengal Government as an individual unworthy of confidence, as one who had betrayed his trust and sacrificed the public interest to personal advantage.

It has been shewn, that at the period of the capture of Java, the public treasury was completely drained, whilst, at the same time, policy and humanity induced the acknowledgment of a large debt in paper currency. Such, however, was the deplorable state of the finances of the island, that in a very short time the paper fell to a discount of sixteen paper rix-dollars for one Spanish dollar. At such a juncture, unanimity in the council was above all things to be desired. The reverse, however, was the case. Difficulties and obstacles were raised, to impede the adoption of measures which had become absolutely necessary for the preservation of the colony and for the reduction of the expenses; and although an apparent concurrence was yielded to some of the propositions which involved questions of much delicacy and moment, those very measures were brought forward as the grounds upon which charges were founded, so deeply affecting every thing most dear to me. Earl Minto had retired from the seat of Government at Calcutta. His Lordship's opinion, on the eve of his quitting India, was expressed to me in the following terms :

“ Your appointment to the high post you now fill was made,
 “ not only upon the most just, but also to yourself upon the
 “ most satisfactory grounds, since it was in consequence of an
 “ implicit conviction that you possessed qualifications equal to

“ 80 ”



“ so great a trust. This original source of gratification not only
 “ remains unimpaired, but has been enhanced by the confir-
 “ mation which these sentiments of anticipated confidence have
 “ received from the eminent success of your administration, and
 “ the display it has afforded of qualifications which could alone
 “ command success.”

By his Lordship's lamented death, I was bereft of my most powerful friend, to whom I could have appealed with confidence against the charge and calumnies which were heaped upon me.

Lord Minto quitted Calcutta in October 1813. In the month of December following (but two months) General GILLESPIE preferred the accusations against me through the Commander-in-Chief. Seventeen articles of charge were drawn out by the Governor-General. They involved an inquiry into the whole of my measures, from my assumption of the government of the island to the period of General GILLESPIE's return to Calcutta.

The proceedings of the Supreme Government were transmitted to me on the 15th January 1814. I replied to them briefly on the 24th February, in which I stated my intention of producing documents, which would throw back on those who made the assertions, the disgrace of having advanced what could not be substantiated. Charges, at which it was impossible for me, in the consciousness of my integrity, not to have felt highly indignant.

On

Java.

On the 25th March 1814, I addressed the Supreme Government, at length, accompanied by voluminous documents in support of my replies to the charges. I was not unconscious that errors in judgment might be found in the complicated and extensive administration with which I was entrusted. A difference of opinion on measures of policy would naturally exist; but I challenged the production of any one act, which could prove that I was actuated by corrupt motives, or guided by views of sinister advantage to myself.

These charges, and the whole of the proceedings of the Bengal Government, had been transmitted home for the information of your Honourable Court. It was to the Supreme Government that I anxiously looked for a decision, which should at once clear my character from the foul aspersions cast upon it. The absence of the Governor-General from the Presidency postponed the formation of any final decision. I had the mortification to remain for eighteen months at the head of a difficult and arduous government, without receiving any intimation of the result of the investigation which had been instituted into my conduct. In the interim, your Honourable Court's orders to the Bengal Government, under which my removal from Java took place, were received in Calcutta.

These orders were founded on the belief, that the measures
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of the Colonial Government had occasioned an excessive burthen on the Indian treasuries; and that the plans which had been adopted for the sale of the lands and a settlement of the land rental, besides other important local regulations as to the paper currency, &c. were, if not injudicious, at least prematurely introduced. No opinion was, however, passed on the charges in question; but my succession to Bencoolen was made contingent upon my successfully refuting them. I stood, therefore, condemned in my character of Lieutenant-Governor, as far as my measures of internal policy were concerned; and before the world, as a servant who had lost the confidence of his superiors, with a character tainted by aspersions, to which the extraordinary silence of the Bengal Government gave some appearance of credit. In such a situation, my only alternative was to seek at the hands of the highest Authority, that honourable acquittal, which I was conscious I should receive when the subject was fully investigated. To stay in India was impossible. With health impaired from arduous duties in a climate proverbially fatal to European constitutions, and under circumstances of no ordinary kind, I proceeded to Europe, and urged at your hands a judgment on my case. My appeal was listened to, the charges investigated, and the following are the terms in which your Honourable Court was pleased to make known your decision to the Supreme Government.

Extract

*Extract Public Letter from the Honourable Court of Directors to
Bengal, dated 13th February 1817.*

Java. “ Para. 2. We have received your letter in this department of
“ the 8th December 1815, in which you draw our attention to
“ your proceedings relative to the charges which were preferred
“ by the late Major-General GILLESPIE and Mr. BLAGRAVE against
“ Mr. RAFFLES, late Lieutenant-Governor of Java, and communi-
“ cate the judgment you have formed and recorded, as the result
“ of a deliberate investigation of those charges.

“ 3. After a scrupulous examination of all the documents, both
“ accusatory and exculpatory, connected with this important
“ subject, and an attentive perusal of the minutes of the Gover-
“ nor-General and of the other members composing the Council
“ when it was under consideration, we think it due to Mr. RAFFLES,
“ to the interests of our service, and to the cause of truth, expli-
“ citly to declare our decided conviction, that the charges, in as
“ far as they went to impeach the moral character of that gentle-
“ man, have not only not been made good, but that they have
“ been disproved, to an extent which is seldom practicable in a
“ case of defence.

“ 4. It is not now our intention to discuss the expediency of
“ the leading measures of the administration of Java while Mr.
“ RAFFLES presided over the government of the island. The
“ policy

policy of those measures is not only separable from the motives
“ which dictated them, but there are cogent reasons why they
“ should be kept altogether distinct and separate on the present
“ occasion.

“ 5. Before pronouncing upon the financial operations of that
“ Government, we are desirous of fuller information, and further
“ time to deliberate on their tendency and effects, as well as on
“ the circumstances under which they were adopted.

“ 6. Were their unseasonableness, improvidence, and inefficacy
“ clearly established, this would only indicate error or defect of
“ judgment, or at most, incompetence in Mr. RAFFLES for the
“ high, and, in many respects, exceedingly difficult situation
“ which he filled.

“ 7. But the purity, as well as the propriety of many of his acts
“ as Lieutenant-Governor having been arraigned, accusations
“ having been lodged against him, which, if substantiated, must
“ have proved fatal to his character, and highly injurious, if not
“ ruinous, to his future prospects in life; his conduct having been
“ subjected to a regular and solemn investigation, and this inves-
“ tigation having demonstrated to our minds the utter ground-
“ lessness of the charges exhibited against him, in so far as they
“ affected his honour, we think that he is entitled to all the
“ advantage of this opinion, and of an early and public expression
“ of it.

Java

“ 8. Mr. EDMONSTONE, in his elaborate and able minute, has
 “ taken so comprehensive and just a view of all the acts which
 “ constituted the grounds of imputation against the personal
 “ character of Mr. RAFFLES, that it is quite unnecessary for us to
 “ enter into a detailed scrutiny of the matters either of charge or
 “ refutation. On most, if not all of the points at issue, we concur
 “ with Mr. EDMONSTONE, both in his reasonings and conclusions :
 “ and whatever judgment may be ultimately passed on the
 “ various measures of the late Government of Java, which under-
 “ went review in the course of the investigation into the conduct
 “ of its head, we are satisfied; not merely that they stand exempt
 “ from any sordid or selfish taint, but that they sprung from
 “ motives perfectly correct and laudable.

“ 9. If we notice the circumstance of Mr. RAFFLES having been
 “ a purchaser of lands at the public sales on the island, it is for
 “ the purpose, not so much of animadverting, after all that has
 “ passed, on the indiscretion of the act (for it was unquestion-
 “ ably indiscreet), as of expressing our firm persuasion that he
 “ has stated, without equivocation or reserve, the reasons which
 “ induced him to engage in these transactions, and that they
 “ do not at all derogate from those principles of integrity, by
 “ which we believe his public conduct to have been uniformly
 “ governed.

“ 10. With

“ 10. With these impressions, we shall not have the least Java.
 “ difficulty in permitting him to proceed from hence (as soon as
 “ his health permits) to Fort Marlbro’, to assume the office of
 “ Resident at that station.”

With regard to the policy of my measures, I perhaps may be permitted to offer one observation.

The expeditions against Palembang, Djojocarta, and Sambas, received the unqualified approbation of the Supreme Government; and it will be quite apparent, that those expeditions entailed a large additional charge upon a treasury already exhausted.

Reductions in the expenses, especially those of the military, were proposed by me, but opposed by the Commander of the Forces. The measures of instituting a land revenue and the sale of lands, have been admitted to be wise and judicious, and the system has been adopted by the present Government.

The doubtful tenure and want of instructions, in consequence of the doubt from whence those instructions should issue, all tended to render the administration of Java, at the outset of the conquest, one of the most intricate and difficult governments that could have fallen to the lot of any person to direct. No deliberate decision has been ever passed upon the political measures of that Government; but whatever may have been the

Java. expense incurred on account of the island while under British rule, it appears by the Treasury Minute of the 26th May 1822, that no question was made by His Majesty's Government as to the amount; and that however large the outlay, the necessity of it was admitted, by its immediate transfer to the public account. It is likewise worthy of remark, that on the restitution of Java to the Dutch, not a pensioner was thrown as a burden upon the Company, not a complaint was preferred by a single native or Dutchman against my rule.

SUMATRA.

Having noticed some of my services in the government of Java and its dependencies, I now proceed to the second head, *viz.*, my appointment to Bencoolen, and the services in which I was there engaged.

I beg permission to advert, in the *first* instance, to the circumstances under which I was originally nominated by the Bengal Government to that station; the suspension of my succession thereto, under the orders of your Honourable Court; and your subsequent confirmation of my appointment, with the rank and title of Lieutenant-Governor.

Secondly, to the state in which I found that settlement and its dependencies on my assuming the office, and the measures which I adopted for effecting a total reform in the system of its administration;

administration ; the success which attended those measures, and Sumatra.
 the approbation thereof by your Honourable Court ; and, *lastly*, to
 the proceedings which I adopted, with reference to the questions
 of the Lampoong country, Samanka Bay, Palembang, Padang,
 Menangkabau, and Pulo Nias ; upon which points I had the mis-
 fortune to incur the displeasure of your Honourable Court.

In the year 1813, the office of Resident at Fort Marlbro' being vacated by the resignation of Mr. PARKER, the Bengal Government, in consideration of what they are pleased to term my " distinguished services in the government of Java," appointed me to succeed thereto, from the period I might be relieved from, or resign the situation I held as Lieutenant-Governor of that island.

In the course of the following year, 1814, the charges preferred by General GILLESPIE, already referred to under the first head of this representation, were received by your Honourable Court ; in consequence of which you were pleased to intimate to the Bengal Government, that my succession to Bencoolen would depend upon my explaining satisfactorily to that Government my conduct as affected by those charges. The circumstance of my removal from the government of Java, and the honourable terms in which my acquittal on the charges is couched, have likewise been noticed. I will here, therefore, merely allude to the closing paragraph of your Honourable Court's dispatch of the 13th February

Sumatra. ruary 1817 to Bengal, which is as follows : “ With these impressions, we shall not have the least difficulty in permitting him to proceed from hence to Sumatra, as soon as his health permits.”

Mr. Secretary Cobb’s letter to the Acting Resident at Fort Marlbro’, under date the 15th October 1817, written by your command, notifies my appointment in the following terms : “ The Court have been pleased to appoint Sir T. S. RAFFLES to be the Resident at Bencoolen, under the designation of Lieutenant-Governor, *such designation being intended as a peculiar mark of the favourable sentiments which the Court entertain of that gentleman’s merits and services.*” And to the Bengal Government, under date the 22d October 1817, your Honourable Court wrote as follows : “ We have now to advise you of our having permitted Sir T. S. RAFFLES to proceed accordingly ; and also that, *in consideration of the zeal and talents he displayed during the period he filled the office of Lieutenant-Governor of Java, we have conferred upon him the title of Lieutenant-Governor of Bencoolen.*”

In October 1817, having been furnished with a commission of Government as Lieutenant-Governor, I embarked at Portsmouth for my destination, and reached Fort Marlbro’ on the 22d March 1818.

The state in which I found the settlement was that of the utmost poverty and wretchedness. Its insignificance was not altogether

altogether unknown to me, after having so long held the chief government of the Archipelago, but I was by no means prepared for the misery which awaited me on my arrival. Sumatra.

Although Bencoolen was one of the first establishments formed by the Company, it had partaken less than any other of the benefits and prosperity resulting from the enlightened principles of their Indian administration. That this should have been the case, may in a great degree be accounted for, from the different circumstances and condition of the place, compared with the Company's possessions on the continent of India. There, we found a cultivated country and a redundant population, which only wanted good government to yield an ample revenue ; while here, we established ourselves in a country deficient in population, and in a new and almost an unappropriated soil, which could only be rendered productive by the introduction of capital and foreign industry. The resources of Bencoolen, whatever they may really be, still remain to be developed, and this development will be precisely in proportion to the capital and industry applied to the land.

In a financial point of view, I found that, instead of the wholesome reductions which might have been expected to follow the orders of 1801, the establishment at the period of my arrival was actually more expensive than it had been anterior to those orders ; and that, as the local Authority had strongly urged the necessity of enlarging it, this establishment was in a progressive state

Sumatra. state of increase, at the same time that it was obvious the resources of the country had greatly diminished.

To account for this, it became necessary to advert to the system of management, when it was obvious to me that the evil was of deeper root than generally imagined. It was not a simple question of finance, whether the Company was content to lose fifty or eighty thousand a year, and regulate their establishment accordingly; it was in the principles of government, and the management of the country, that the evil lay.

The *forced services*, the *free gardens*, *gaming and cock-fighting*, and *slavery*, were among the principal evils which required a remedy. The necessity of forcing the industry of the people, so much insisted upon by former Authorities, appeared not only questionable, but contrary to every principle of good policy and enlightened government, and quite inapplicable to the circumstances of the place, and the interests and character of the East-India Company.

The principle of what were called the *free gardens* was as follows.

In the Out-residencies, the sum of six dollars per hundred-weight was to be given for all pepper cultivated beyond the stipulated number of vines already kept up by each cultivator. Inland of Bencoolen, where there were no gardens on the old footing, the same sum was to be given for any pepper cultivated; but, in both

both cases, the pepper was to be delivered exclusively to the Sumatra.
Company. Advances, to an enormous amount, were considered indispensable ; but there is reason to believe much of this amount never reached the actual cultivator, nor even the Native Chiefs, certainly not in money ; but they were all rendered *debtors* by it, and the actual cultivators made responsible for its reimbursement.

What little pepper might have been delivered at the Out-residencies on this principle, had generally been from the produce of the old gardens exclusively, tendered and received on the new principle. The people were already compelled to more labour in the old gardens than they could well perform.

With regard to the Marlbro' free gardens, which were the most extensive, it may be sufficient to state, that out of the original advance of 79,030 dollars made to the planters sixteen years previously, only 24,223 dollars had been repaid, and that a debt to the amount of 44,807 dollars consequently stood against them. An officer, termed the *Superintendent*, had charge of them, and large sums, by way of customs and commission, were given in advance to some of the chiefs to secure their influence.

But so far from the cultivation being *free*, as the designation of the gardens would lead one to suppose, the cultivators were, if possible, under still worse conditions than in the gardens under the old system. But few of them paid their debt ; two thirds of the

Sumatra people to whom the advances were originally made, had either emigrated or died.

The Malay law stipulates, that after the decease of a debtor, his children, in the first instance, and after their death the village to which he belonged, is still liable for the debt. Thus not only the original contractors were rendered slave debtors, as they are termed, but their offspring, and eventually the people in general, reduced to the same hapless state.

Under the plea of recovering these debts, and considering the people as debtors, they were compelled to work; and for the sum which ought to be paid for the pepper delivered, a deduction of sometimes half was made, in discharge of the debt; so that, in fact, the cultivators did not receive more than they would have done under the old system, and were equally bound to serve.

Of the oppressions and disabilities under which the native population laboured, it may be sufficient to notice the system of pepper cultivation. Of the temptation to vice by which they were surrounded, it may be observed that the principal revenue of the Government was in the opium and *gaming and cock-fighting farms*, the continuance of which, particularly of the last, appeared to me destructive of every principle of good government and social order, and of the morals of the people.

At

At Marlbro' and its suburbs, public gaming and cock-fighting were not only practised under the eye of the chief Authority, but publicly patronized by Government; and, as might be expected, there was neither security for person or property to be found. Murders were daily committed, and robberies perpetrated, which were never traced, nor indeed attempted to be traced, and profligacy and immorality obtruded themselves wherever I turned. Sumatra.

Of African slaves the property of Government, there were (men, women, and children) upwards of two hundred, most of them born at Bencoolen, being the children of slaves originally purchased by the East-India Company. They had hitherto been considered as indispensable for the duties of the place, and it had been asserted that they were happier than free men.

I could not be expected to concur in either of these views. They were employed in loading and unloading the Company's ships, and other hard work, for which free labourers ought to have been engaged. No care having been taken of their morals, many of them were dissolute and depraved, the women living in promiscuous intercourse with the public convicts, for the purpose (as I was informed by the Superintendant) "of keeping up the breed," and the children left to a state of nature, vice, and wretchedness.

The practice of slavery being very general on the coast, it was my intention to have adopted by degrees all measures which

Sumatra. might tend to its entire abolition. I caused the whole of the Company's slaves to be brought before the first public assembly of the chiefs, and after explaining to them the principles and views of the British Government with regard to the abolition generally, I gave to each of the slaves a certificate of freedom: a measure which made a considerable impression, and promised to be followed by the most favourable results.

I had subsequently the satisfaction of passing a Regulation, with the entire concurrence of the Native Chiefs, by which slavery was eventually abolished, and the laws regarding debtors modified, so as to render them consistent with our principles of Government.

If a cure was to be found for the evils I have depicted, certainly it was not to be sought in the simple financial reduction of establishment; an inadequate salary given to the overseer by Government creates the greater motive to draw his advantage from the people subjected to him. A subsistence, and even a liberal one, he expects, and will obtain, if not by open, certainly by clandestine means. The evil was in the system of management, and nothing but a thorough change could ever render these possessions either valuable or honourable.

The first step was to ascertain the sentiments of the chiefs, and if practicable to enter into such agreements with them, as might leave it in the power of Government to effect any change they might deem most advisable in the mode of management.

Finding

Finding them very reasonable on the subject, I accordingly entered into a provisional treaty with them, whereby, Sumatra.

1st, All former treaties were annulled.

2dly, Authority was given to the Company to administer the country according to equity, justice, and good policy ; and

3dly, The cultivation of pepper was declared free, the people being at liberty to cultivate that article or not at pleasure.

The Chiefs represented to me the disgrace attached to the native character, by the Regulations which prohibited the inhabitants from wearing their creese and other weapons in the town of Marlbro', according to the custom of the country and the usage of nearly a century ; and not being aware of any advantages to be derived from this want of confidence in their good intentions, I rescinded the Regulations.

This measure, connected with the dismissal of the mounted body guard in attendance on the chief Authority, and the general reduction of the military sentinels, by shewing the confidence which I personally placed in the inhabitants, seemed to raise them in their own estimation, and in some degree to relieve them from the listlessness in which I found them. And now that the gaming and cock-fighting farms were discontinued, and an idea gone abroad that every one might reap the fruits of his own industry, I had reason to hope that day was not far distant, when
I might

Sumatra. I might be able to place the Malayan character in a different light to that in which it had for many years been viewed.

I have endeavoured to detail, as briefly as the circumstances would admit, the objects which engaged my attention, as connected with the internal state of the settlement.

I accordingly brought the subject to the notice of the Bengal Government, accompanied by such suggestions as I deemed best calculated to remove the existing evils; and I had the satisfaction to receive their marked approbation of my attempt to improve the then prevailing system, and their concurrence in the principles upon which I proposed to ground my future measures.

That satisfaction was greatly enhanced, by an intimation that your Honourable Court entirely concurred with the Bengal Government in admitting the necessity of a reform; and you were pleased to express your satisfaction at the good effects which had already been experienced from the changes then introduced.

The result of the whole may be stated as follows:

The pepper monopoly was relinquished.

Free cultivation introduced, and agriculture considerably extended.

Slavery abolished.

Encouragement given to the cultivation of grain, with the view of rendering the settlement independent of foreign supplies.

The

The relation between the chiefs of districts and cultivating classes was adjusted. Sumatra.

A recognition was made of native property in the soil.

The Company withdrew from the management of the interior, and native officers, from the Buggese corps, were introduced, in the capacity of superintending chiefs.

A good police was introduced.

Cock-fighting and gaming prohibited; and, lastly,

Native schools were established at Bencoolen, and extending throughout the country in every direction.

In a commercial point of view, I had the satisfaction to witness, before I quitted the settlement, the rapid and successful progress which had been made in the cultivation of coffee, sugar, rice, pepper, &c. Although the consignments to Europe might not at first be so low in cost as the importations from other parts, both in the east and west, I think I may state, that, in point of quality, those articles of produce were no ways inferior; and had the settlement remained with us, I have no doubt that, in a short period, the above-mentioned articles would have been produced in sufficient abundance, and at such reasonable rates, as would have enabled the cultivators to supply the home market, with advantage to themselves as well as to the consumer.

I merely mention these facts, to shew that my best exertions were used to render the settlement beneficially productive, and independent

Sumatra. independent of foreign supplies for the subsistence of its population.

I now beg leave to notice the proceedings in which I was concerned, and which partake, in some degree, of a political character.

It has been very naturally asked, under what authority I took cognizance of any proceedings of the Dutch, either of a political or commercial nature, which did not affect the interests immediately connected with Fort Marlbro', or its dependencies?

At the period I was about to embark for Sumatra in 1817, very strong apprehensions were entertained by those interested in the trade of the Eastern Archipelago, that the Dutch would succeed in re-establishing the supremacy which they once possessed in that quarter of the globe; and as their jealousy of us was well known, they would naturally take every means of debarring us from participating in a trade from which we had derived such considerable benefit. It was conceived that I might be enabled, from time to time, to afford information on the subject to the Authorities in this country; and the following letter was accordingly addressed to me, by the order of your Honourable Court, *viz.*

“ East.

" East-India House, 5th Nov. 1817.

" SIR :

" It is highly desirable that the Court of Directors should
" receive early and constant information of the proceedings of
" the Dutch and other European nations, as well as of the
" Americans, in the Eastern Archipelago. The Court therefore
" desire, that you will direct your attention to the object of
" regularly obtaining such information, and that you will transmit
" the same to them by every convenient opportunity, accompa-
" nied by such observations as may occur to you, whether of a
" political or commercial nature. You will furnish the Supreme
" Government with copies of these communications. In the
" event of any such communication appearing to you to be of a
" nature to require secrecy, you will address your letter to the
" Secret Committee.

" I have the honour to be, &c.,

(Signed) " JAMES COBB,
" Secretary."

" *Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles,*
" *Lieutenant-Governor of Fort Marlbro'.*"

The first question in which I became involved in a discus-
sion with the Dutch Government regarded their claims in the
F southern

Sumatra. southern part of Sumatra, in what is called the Lampoong country.

On my arrival at Bencoolen, I found that they had sent over a Commissioner, with the view of re-establishing their authority in that country; but so long had they abandoned it, and so undefined was their claim, that the Commissioner himself was obliged to apply to us for information on the subject, alledging that he could obtain none that was satisfactory on the spot.

The object of the Dutch Government, by the re-occupation of this territory, being to exclude our ships from a right to anchorage and refreshments in any part of the Straits of Sunda, except at their pleasure, and the importance of our retaining at least one convenient harbour, induced me to resist what I considered an undue pretension on their part, pending a decision by the Authorities in Europe; adopting such preparatory measures, in the meantime, by surveying the coasts and harbours, as might facilitate any arrangement eventually decided upon.

With respect to the appeal which was subsequently made by the Sultan of Palembang, it is not necessary for me to do more than to refer to the protest which I deemed it my duty to make against the proceedings of the Dutch Government on that occasion. It may, however, be proper to explain, that the territories of Palembang and Bencoolen join, and that whatever affected the former state had an immediate influence on the other. Thus the proceedings of the Dutch in that quarter could,

not

not be viewed with indifference, even as affecting the local Sumatra, interests of the Residency of Bencoolen; but the policy and views of the Commissioners at Batavia had by this time become so unambiguously manifest, that I felt myself called upon, as the nearest British authority, and the only one which could perhaps at this time form a due estimate of the consequences that might ensue by allowing them to proceed in their career unchecked, to go farther, and to enter my protest against their proceedings in the Archipelago generally.

However necessary and important this proceeding on my part may have been, yet with reference to the notice which was at that time taken of the measure in Europe, I refrain from adverting more particularly to the same in this place, and will only observe, that the views therein taken by me of the general policy of the Dutch, were subsequently fully adopted by the Governor-General in Council, who did not hesitate to state his opinion, “ that the proceedings of the Netherlands’ Authorities, “ since the arrival of the Commissioners-General to receive “ charge of the Dutch colonies, had been actuated by a spirit of “ ambition, by views of boundless aggrandizement and rapacity, “ and by a desire to obtain the power of monopolizing the com- “ merce of the Eastern Archipelago, and of excluding us from “ those advantages which we had long enjoyed, and which we “ only wished to share in common with the other nations of the

Sumatra. “ earth ;” and further, to declare, “ that this spirit of aggran-
 “ dizement, and their manifest endeavours to establish an
 “ absolute supremacy to our exclusion, made it necessary for us
 “ to adopt precautions with the view to avert the injury and
 “ degradation which could not fail to ensue, from a listless sub-
 “ mission to the unbounded pretensions displayed on the part of
 “ the Netherlands’ Authorities.”

If the records are referred to, I am persuaded your Honour-
 able Court will readily admit, that the Sultan might be expected
 to appeal to the nearest British Authority to protect him. The
 treaty by which the island of Banca was ceded to us in 1812,
 stipulated that we should maintain the Sultan on his throne. By
 the convention of 1814 we ceded Banca to the Dutch. The only
 right we had to make such cession was in virtue of the treaty of
 1812; I therefore could not for a moment hesitate in the line of
 conduct I ought to pursue. There was no other Resident British
 power nearer than Prince of Wales’ Island; and the fact of a
 Dutch line-of-battle ship lying opposite Palembang, clearly evinced
 the impossibility which existed of his holding any communication
 with the Government on that Island.

It was under these circumstances that I felt bound to enter
 my solemn protest against the proceedings of the Netherlands’
 Government at Batavia, and to send home direct to your Honour-
 able Court a detail of the facts, which I was persuaded could not
 fail

fail to awake your sympathy, and I had hopes would have ensured your approbation for the part I had taken. Sumatra.

I at the same time entered my protest against the occupation of *Billiton* by Dutch troops : a right which they clearly did not possess, as it is only by the late treaty that the objections on the part of Great-Britain to their occupying it are withdrawn.

About this time a Commissioner arrived from Batavia, for the purpose of taking possession of Padang. A considerable debt was due to the English on account of that settlement ; under these circumstances, and adverting to the disposition evinced by the Dutch to grasp at every possession, to our utter exclusion, I declined to lower the British flag, until further orders from my superiors for that purpose.

Not having any reason to anticipate the cession of our settlements in Sumatra, and conceiving that a more perfect knowledge of the interior of the Island, especially that part comprising the kingdom of Menangkabau, the principal sovereignty, which formerly comprehended the whole, and still receives a shadow of homage from the most powerful of the other kingdoms which have sprung up ; I visited Padang, and from thence crossed the mountains and entered the Tiga Blas country, where treaties of friendship and commerce were concluded, and an opening for a valuable trade secured to the British.

My attention was next drawn to the island of Nias,
which

Sumatra. which is situated opposite the settlement of Tappanooly and Nattal, and on which the Resident had always maintained a small establishment.

Frequent representations had reached me from the Resident at Nattal, of the dreadful ravages to which the country was exposed, from the operation of an active slave trade which was carried on at Nias : it was at the same time stated, that considerable supplies of rice might be obtained for our population on the coast; and as the natives were tractable, faithful, and industrious, the prospect of inducing some to emigrate, and assist in improving our possessions in Sumatra, formed additional reasons for deputing a commission to that island, for the purpose of collecting information in the above points.

Under the sanction of the Supreme Government, I appointed Mr. CHRISTIE to proceed to Pulo Nias in the month of July 1820. That gentleman was obliged to return on account of ill health, after having visited only one of the ports. Captain SALMOND, on his return from Tappanooly, surveyed some of its coasts. The joint information which they afforded was sufficient to invite further research, and I accordingly nominated a commission of two gentlemen to proceed for the purpose of adjusting the differences which then existed, and to provide for the tranquillity of the country; to obtain the most accurate information of its population and resources, and to place the natives so far under
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the direct authority of the Company's government, as to leave the question as to future management of the island entirely to the judgment of the Governor-General. Sumatra.

It is quite unnecessary for me to enlarge in this paper on the result of the mission, from which we learnt that the population consisted of not less than 230,000 souls; that the state of cultivation was such as to furnish an export of 12,000 bags of rice annually; and that the number of slaves taken from Nias in each year exceeded 1500!

The circumstances that attended the latter inhuman traffic were of the most appalling nature, and no less revolting than those which attached to the same abominable commerce on the coast of Africa.

The unhappy victims, torn by violence from their friends and country, are delivered, pinioned hand and foot, to the dealers in human flesh, and kept bound during the whole course of the voyage. Instances have occurred, where the captives have seized a moment of liberty to snatch up the first weapon within their reach, stab all whom they encountered, and conclude the scene by leaping overboard, and seeking deliverance from their persecutors in a watery grave!

In a subsequent dispatch, I brought to the notice of your Honourable Court the connexion which existed between Nias-Nattal and the Menangkabau country, and I ventured to point out
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Sumatra the advantages which might, in all probability, be derived by the natives of the several countries, as well as by the Company, from encouraging and prosecuting such an intercourse.

The only remaining measure at all of a political nature, was the arrangement which I entered into with the Passumahs, by which the warfare carried on between the natives of the interior and those on the coast was put an end to, and the Passumahs were taken under the Company's government and protection.

I have thus detailed, in as short a compass as possible, the leading measures in which I was engaged while filling the office of Lieutenant-Governor of Bencoolen ; and whilst I have had the gratification to receive your Honourable Court's express approbation of those relative to the reform of the system under which the Company's affairs had been so long administered in Sumatra, it has been a source of unmingled regret, that I should have incurred your displeasure at the adoption of proceedings which unavoidably involved collision with the Dutch Authorities. It has only remained for me to explain the reasons which weighed with me in the adoption of such measures, and to bow with submission to your decision thereon.

SINGAPORE.

I willingly turn to a more pleasing part of the duty which I had to perform during my recent administration, namely, the occupation and establishment of the British settlement at Singapore :

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a measure, in the prosecution of which I necessarily became Singapore.
involved in difficulties and responsibilities, no less trying and peculiar than those under which I had laboured during my previous administration in Java. In this case, however, I have at least the satisfaction of reflecting, that advantages will accrue to my own country, instead of becoming the means of wealth and power to a rival nation.

At the period when I arrived at Bencoolen from England, the Governor-General was understood to be up the country, engaged in a war which afterwards terminated so favourably to our interests on the continent of India; but I lost no time in stating to his Lordship the advantages which might result from an interview, and my anxiety to lay before him, in person, the circumstances which appeared to me to demand the early attention of the Supreme Government to the British interests in the Eastern Islands, and I was accordingly invited to proceed to Calcutta, shortly after his Lordship's return from the Upper Provinces.

The measures which I had adopted in Sumatra, and in particular the general protest which I had made against the Netherlands' Authority, on the occasion of its interference at Palembang, were calculated to attract the immediate attention of the Governor-General in Council; and as the Netherlands' Government had submitted to the same Authority its appeal against the part I had taken, the question at issue was now fairly before the

Singapore. Supreme Government, and it became indispensable that a general review should be taken of the circumstances under which our interests to the eastward were placed. Fortunately the Government of Prince of Wales' Island had at length, on the transfer of Malacca to the Dutch, been awakened to the dangerous consequences that must have ensued to the interests of that island and our eastern trade generally, and their representations had the effect of corroborating and confirming all my previous apprehensions and statements.

Having thus succeeded in bringing the subject fully before a higher and competent Authority, and having convinced that Authority of the necessity of adopting some defined line of policy for the protection of those interests, I had the satisfaction to find that, at length, their nature and importance were justly appreciated, and that the measures which I had previously adopted, however they might be regretted as occasioning collision with the Netherlands' Government, were admitted "to have been dictated
 " by the purest spirit of patriotism, and to have been such that,
 " in the circumstances in which I was placed, I could not well
 " have acted otherwise than I did."

It is not necessary, and perhaps it might be improper in this place, to advert to the grounds on which the Governor-General resolved upon the line of policy that was subsequently adopted. It may be sufficient to state, that it was determined, under existing
 circumstances,

circumstances, to concede to the Dutch their pretensions in Su- Singapore.
matra, and to limit our interference to measures of precaution, by securing a free passage for our trade with the Archipelago and China through the Straits of Malacca, leaving to the Dutch the exclusive command of the Straits of Sunda. In order to effect this, and at the same time to protect our political and commercial interests in the Eastern Seas generally, it was essential that some central station should be occupied by us, within the Archipelago, and to the southward of Malacca; and I was appointed, in the capacity of Agent to the Governor-General, to effect this important object if practicable, and generally to assume the charge of the British interests to the eastward of the Straits of Malacca.

Of the delicacy and difficulties which this trust involved, some idea may be formed, when it is considered, that before I had reached Prince of Wales' Island on my way to the eastward, the Government of that settlement had failed in an attempt to acquire such a station, had declared its conviction that the period had passed in which any such station could be obtained within the Archipelago, and on my arrival protested in the strongest manner, and exercised its power and influence in every possible way, against my proceeding towards the attainment of this important object; while the Dutch Authorities, having as they thought already succeeded in occupying every station, had not hesitated to declare their supremacy over the whole Archipelago, and to

Singapore. publish their prohibitory regulations for the exclusion of our commerce, and the exercise of their own sovereignty throughout the Eastern Seas.

My instructions were to avoid actual collision with the Dutch Authorities, but they did not provide for so unforeseen a case as that of collision with one of our own Governments; and I was left to decide, whether, out of a complimentary deference to the local Government of Prince of Wales' Island, I should forego the attainment of what, in my judgment, still appeared practicable, and the consequent execution of the important trust with which I was vested by a higher Authority, or whether, indeed, I should be justified in so doing. It was impossible for me not to be sensible of the local impression which prevailed, that the establishment of any new station farther to the eastward would be detrimental to this settlement: and it was but due to make some allowance for the feelings excited by the interference of the Supreme Government, in appointing me personally to effect an object, which the Government of Prince of Wales' Island might have considered as falling within its own jurisdiction; although it is a remarkable fact, that the trade and interests of Prince of Wales' Island formed one of the principal grounds which rendered the adoption of the measure indispensable in the eyes of the Supreme Government.

That

That I have not overstated the difficulty I had to contend with, and the opposition which I experienced, will be fully apparent by the following quotation from a letter to the Prince of Wales' Island Government from your Honourable Court in 1820. " We postpone pronouncing whether your President or " Sir T. S. RAFFLES has formed the more correct opinion of " the proper course of proceedings in matters connected with the " mission to Acheen and the Eastward. We applaud the zeal of " Colonel Bannerman : but whilst ample justice is thus done, we " must observe with regret, that Colonel BANNERMAN appears to " have been betrayed, by the warmth of discussion, into an impu- " tation to Sir T. S. RAFFLES of motives totally irreconcilable " with every principal of public duty."

Referring to the records for all further particulars, I will only observe, that taking an entirely different view of the subject from that entertained by the Government of Prince of Wales' Island, I proceeded in person to the eastward ; and in the course of ten days after quitting Penang had the satisfaction, on the 29th of February 1819, of hoisting the British flag at Singapore, situated at the southern extremity of the Peninsula, and commanding at once all the advantages, and embracing all the objects which my most sanguine hopes could have anticipated or desired.

The short experience which had been afforded of the bold and vigorous policy of the Dutch, since the restoration to them of
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Singapore. our conquests in the Eastern Seas, had been sufficient to demonstrate the spirit of exclusion and encroachment which characterized and animated their rising power, and to satisfy us of the necessity which was thereby enforced upon our Government, of guarding against the abuse of our liberality, and of securing the means of protecting our commercial and political relations, before the maturity and consolidation of their arrangements should have deprived us of the power of averting the evil consequences which might arise from their success.

With this view, it was of primary importance to obtain a port which should have a commanding geographical position at the southern entrance of the Straits of Malacca, which should be in the track of our China and country trade, which should be capable of affording them protection and of supplying their wants, which should possess capabilities of defence by a moderate force, which might give us the means of supporting and defending our commercial intercourse with the Malay states, and which, by its contiguity to the seat of the Dutch power, might enable us to watch the march of its policy, and when necessary to counteract its influence.

This measure was in some degree necessary, to evince to the varied and enterprising population of these islands, that our commercial and political views in this quarter had not entirely sunk under the vaunted power and encroachment of the Dutch, and to
 prove

prove to them that we were determined to make a stand against it. Singapore.

By maintaining our right to a free commerce with the Malay States, and inspiring them with a confidence in the stability of it, we were justified in contemplating its advancement to a much greater extent than had hitherto been enjoyed.

Independently of the tribes of the Archipelago, the situation of Singapore was peculiarly favorable for its becoming the entrepôt to which the native traders of Siam, Camboja, Chumpha, Cochin-China, and China itself, might annually resort. It was to the Straits of Singapore that their merchants were always bound, in the first instance; and if, on their arrival in them, they could find a market for their goods, and the means of supplying their wants, they would have no inducement to proceed to the more distant, unhealthy, and expensive port of Batavia. Siâm, which is the granary of the countries north of the Equator, was rapidly extending her native commerce; nearly the whole might be expected to centre at Singapore. The passage from China had been made in less than six days, and the same number of days being all that is requisite in the favorable monsoon for the passage from Batavia, the coast of Borneo and Penang, the advantages of its central position for the purposes of commerce, need no further explanation.

In how far the occupation of Singapore has been found to answer all these purposes, the experience of the past five years, during

Singapore. during which it has been in our possession, affords the best proof.

I will only observe, that while it has effectually prevented the system of exclusive monopoly aimed at by the Dutch, it has tended essentially to the increase of our commerce. During the first two years of the settlement, no less than 2,889 vessels entered at the port, of which 383 were owned and commanded by Europeans, and 2,506 by natives, and their united tonnage amounted to nearly 200,000 tons : The value of merchandize in native vessels which entered and quitted within the same period being estimated at about five millions of dollars, and that of the imports and exports by European vessels not amounting to less than three millions more. During the subsequent year 1822, the tonnage employed in the trade of Singapore was not less than 130,629 tons ; and the value of the imports and exports by the same, amounted to Spanish Dollars 8,568,171. In the last year, 1823, the tonnage amounted to 151,991 tons, and the value of the imports and exports to Spanish Dollars 13,268,397.

Of the present circumstances of Singapore, of its rapid rise and prosperity, and of the prospects which it holds out of greatly extending and improving our commerce in the East, I shall refrain from particular notice in this place. These particulars it is proposed to give to the public in a separate memoir, in which its progress from the commencement will be stated in detail.

detail. I will only adduce, in proof of its not having disap- Singapore.
 pointed the expectations which were entertained of it, the follow-
 ing extract from the Resolutions of the Governor-General in
 Council, on the occasion of my resigning charge of the settlement
 in 1823.

“ The increasing population, commerce, and wealth of Singa-
 “ pore, in spite of those restraints which a necessary policy has
 “ compelled us to impose on its growing prosperity, while the
 “ permanence of its tenure is uncertain, prove beyond a doubt
 “ the extent to which they will quickly be carried, the moment
 “ those restraints may be removed, and a full scope given to the
 “ enterprize and capital of European and native settlers. The
 “ interests of so rising and important a possession cannot, there-
 “ fore, be placed under any superintendence, so well calculated
 “ to give a proper direction and encouragement to its rapidly-
 “ extending resources, as that of the Supreme Government of
 “ India.”

I also refrain from noticing, in this place, the particulars
 of our political connexion with Singapore, and the grounds on
 which I felt myself justified in occupying that station ; and shall
 content myself with inserting the following extract from the
 communication made by the Governor-General to the Netherlands’
 Authorities of Batavia, in consequence of the appeal of that
 authority against my proceedings.

Singapore. “ We shall endeavour to ascertain, to our own satisfaction,
 “ whether or not the Netherlands’ nation possess a right to the
 “ exclusive occupation of Singapore; and if that point be
 “ decided in the affirmative, we shall, without hesitation, obey
 “ the dictates of justice, by withdrawing our establishments from
 “ that place. We most cordially invite your Excellency to fur-
 “ nish us with proofs of the justness of your pretensions. We
 “ do not seek any advantage which is not supported by truth and
 “ equity, and we shall really feel indebted to your Excellency for
 “ putting us right, if we have erred in the view we have taken of
 “ this question.”

The above communication was made to the Netherlands’ Authorities at Batavia as far back as June 1819, and neither have the result of the investigations which have taken place, or the representations of the Dutch Government, made any alterations, in the view first taken of the subject by the Governor-General in Council. The grounds on which I felt myself justified in establishing it have not been shaken; and it follows that these grounds, in the opinion of the Governor-General in Council, must therefore have been legal and just.

In how far my administration of the settlement, during the period it has been in our possession, has been satisfactory to the superior Authorities, I have to refer to the resolutions of the Governor-General in Council, on the occasion of my resigning
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the further charge of the settlement ; and, in particular, to the Singapore.
following paragraph, with which those resolutions conclude.

“ On the occasion of relieving Sir T. S. RAFFLES from the
“ superintendence of Singapore, the Governor-General in Coun-
“ cil deems it an act of justice to that gentleman, to record his
“ sense of the activity, zeal, and judgment, and attention to the
“ principles prescribed for the management of the settlement,
“ which has marked his conduct in the execution of that duty.”

It may not be necessary, in this place, to notice in detail the several provisional Regulations passed for the internal management of the settlement : but, in order to shew the principles on which its administration is conducted, and the grounds on which its future prosperity may be anticipated, I think it right to refer in a particular manner to a Report made by me to the Governor-General in Council in 1820, on the advantages that might be expected to be derived by the occupation of Singapore, and on which his Lordship was pleased to express his sentiments to the following effect :—

1st. That having perused that paper with much interest and attention, the sentiments of the Governor-General in Council, in respect to the expediency of considering the extension of commerce as the main object of pursuit in all arrangements with the Eastern Islands, coincided entirely with those stated by me.

Singapore.

2d. That this Report would be brought to the notice of the Court of Directors, as a document to which it is highly important they should refer, in considering the general system to be pursued in regard to the management of our Eastern possessions, and one which may aid their judgment in estimating the extent and nature of the commercial advantage which they are designed to secure.

3d. That to whatever limits those possessions may be confined, the Governor-General in Council is fully satisfied that their real advantages are to be ensured by a strict adherence to the principle above indicated: and that Government has, indeed, on several occasions, recorded its decided opinion on the inexpediency of any attempt to raise a local revenue, by measures calculated injuriously to obstruct the freedom of commercial intercourse; and

4th. That by those principles, the administration of the places under my authority would, of course, be guided.

Slavery is a feature in the administration of the Eastern Islands, with which the European settlements have been too generally disgraced. Much as we may lament the existence of slavery in settlements where that state may have been recognized by us previously to the late enactments of the Legislature, and however difficult it may be to eradicate the evil, except by slow and partial means, the peculiar circumstances of Singapore, which
 establishment

establishment was formed subsequent to those enactments, afforded Singapore me a fair opportunity of declaring and acting up to our principles for preventing that odious condition ; and I accordingly laid it down as a fundamental principle in the constitution of the place.

1st. That the act of parliament prohibiting the slave trade having been passed previously to the establishment of Singapore, the provisions of that act were in force in that settlement.

2d. That as the condition of slavery, under any denomination whatever, could not be recognized within the jurisdiction of the British authority, no individual could be imported for sale, transferred, or sold as a slave, after the establishment of the settlement ; or having his or her fixed residence at Singapore, could be considered or treated as a slave, under any denomination, condition, colour, or pretence whatsoever : and

3d. That a continued residence of twelve months at Singapore should be considered to constitute a fixed residence, and to entitle the party to all the benefit of the British administration.

For the manner in which these objects were effected, without inconvenience to the trade of the port, and for the modification of the usage regarding bond debtors, I refer more particularly to the Regulation itself.

On the Regulations provisionally established for the police and administration of justice, it is difficult to present concisely the view which the importance of the subject demands.

The

Singapore.

The extent of population and capital which had accumulated requiring an immediate provision for the preservation of order and the protection of person and property, the names of the several British inhabitants of interest and respectability in the settlement were enrolled, and commissioned to act as Magistrates, taking it in turn to act as sitting Magistrates; and once in a quarter, or oftener, as occasion might require, to hold a meeting, of the nature of quarter sessions, for the hearing and deciding of cases which might exceed the authority of a single Magistrate, and doing all such things as are usually done at quarter sessions in England, as far as the object and nature of that institution could be considered applicable to the circumstances of the settlement.

For the adjustment of small debts, the Magistrates were empowered to decide in a summary manner within a limited amount; and the Assistant to the Resident was authorized to perform the duties of Notary Public.

It being expedient that an authority should exist for the enactment, from time to time, of such local laws and regulations as the circumstances of the settlement might require, the Resident has been empowered to pass such Regulations, by and with the advice of the magistrates, subject to the confirmation of the Governor-General in Council; and provided always that such laws, and

and regulations are of a local nature, and in no way inconsistent with, or repugnant to any known British law or usage.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, and that I may not intrude longer than is necessary on the time of your Honourable Court, I request, in as far as my administration of Java is concerned, most respectfully to recall the attention of your Honourable Court to the Memorial which I had the honour to present on my arrival in England in August 1816. In that Memorial I ventured to offer a brief explanation on those points of general administration and policy which formed the grounds of your orders for my removal, under date the 18th May 1815; and to adduce proof, that the judgment of the Supreme Government on the questions at issue, and on which your opinion had been formed, was necessarily partial and incomplete. These questions were, the propriety, or otherwise, of retaining a political influence in the Eastern Archipelago, in the possible event of Java reverting to Holland; the introduction of the system of land revenue; the proceedings at Palembang; and especially, the financial embarrassments which had accrued from the possession of Java by the British Government.

At that period, it would have been premature to have urged an immediate decision upon these points, and I was

content

Conclusion. content to refer you, generally, to the despatches at the close of my administration, and to leave them to the result of future inquiry and examination. Time has, however, now been given to the public to have formed an opinion of the general character of my administration; and the concluding reports of the Commissioners on the transfer of the colony to the Dutch, will long since have enabled your Honourable Court to satisfy yourselves with regard to all particulars.

In favour of my government, I might advert to the testimony borne by the improved state in which the island of Java is universally admitted to have been restored to the Dutch, contrasted with its condition when it first came under my authority; and by the enhanced value and importance which it has since assumed, in consequence of that improvement, and of the more enlarged and liberal principles on which its affairs are now, for the first time, conducted. On this point I need only refer to the fact, that the highest revenue that had ever been raised by the Dutch in Java, in any one year antecedent to the conquest, did not exceed four millions of rupees; while, at present, the receipts into the Government treasury are not less than thirty millions of rupees. I might adduce proof, that down to the late Earl of Minto's arrival in England and death, I had the satisfaction to enjoy the fullest confidence and approbation of that ever-to-be-lamented nobleman. I might further shew, that no sooner was
the

the Marquis of Hastings, his successor, satisfied by my explanations, and the decision of your Honourable Court, that my moral character stood unimpeached, than he withdrew his displeasure; and in regretting the difference of opinion which had taken place upon points of policy, was the first, on my return to India, to bear testimony in favour of my administration; and the more especially, of that part which affected the native inhabitants, and which his Lordship was pleased to consider no less creditable to myself than honourable to my country. I might, indeed, refer to the opinion entertained of my administration by the Netherlands' Government, to whom the colony was transferred; and, in this respect, adduce evidence which is not liable to the charge of being biassed by any thing like personal favour or consideration, to shew, "that the more my principles and views are developed, and known, the more they are approved and acted upon."

I place the fullest confidence in the liberal judgment which may be passed upon my course of service by your Honourable Court. All that I am desirous of doing is, to advert generally to its nature and extent: and, with this view, to request your attention to such of the documents on record, as may tend to illustrate and explain the different acts of my government. I would, in a particular manner, refer to the communications which took place with the late Earl of Minto, previous and immediately subsequent to the conquest of Java: the Report which I submitted to his Lordship on the

Conclusion. accomplishment of that object, and the several dispatches of the Supreme Government conveying the decisions of that authority on the expeditions to and political arrangements effected at Palembang, at the native courts in Java, and at Sambas in Borneo ; to the several Reports on the island of Banca ; and, in a particular manner, to the Report made by me to the Supreme Government on the arrival of the Marquis of HASTINGS, regarding the policy of maintaining an influence in the Archipelago, and particularly as to the extension of it in Borneo ; the Minutes recorded by me on the introduction of the land revenue and judicial administration of the country ; my dispatches to Bengal at the close of my administration ; and, in particular, to the Reports and accounts of the Commissioners who eventually transferred the colony to the Dutch.

I need not allude to Bencoolen, more than to advert to the reforms which were suggested by me through the Supreme Government, by whom they were fully approved, and subsequently effected, with the sanction of your Honourable Court ; and to refer you to my Report on that settlement in the year 1820, and the success which attended my administration, as far as affected the general prosperity and improvement of the settlement.

I lastly turn to the acquisition of Singapore. When the difficulties I had to contend with, and the responsibility I incurred, and from which the Bengal Government declined to relieve me, are considered :

considered : when it is admitted, that the possession of that settle- Conclusion.
 ment has afforded the means of our acquiring the Dutch establish-
 ments on the Continent of India, which it had been proposed to
 purchase at great cost, secures a position which is confessedly advan-
 tagous for embracing the benefit of the Eastern trade, while it does
 not subject the Company to a larger annual charge than £12,000 or
 £14,000, and at the same time relieves them from an annual charge
 little short of £100,000 on account of Bencoolen : I trust I am not
 too sanguine in my expectations, that your Honourable Court will
 see reason to admit that my services may furnish some grounds to
 justify this appeal. Every thing regarding the establishment of this
 settlement is so recent, and must be so well known to your Honour-
 able Court, that referring to the circumstance which led to its occu-
 pation, and to its unexampled success, as a proof of the correctness
 of the views which I was induced to take of the advantages and
 necessity of such a station, and of the soundness of the principles
 on which its administration has been conducted, I need only request
 your attention to the report which I had the honour to make to the
 Supreme Government, and to the local Regulations No. 1 to 6, which
 were passed by me for the internal administration of the settlement.

It will, I trust, be found, that the principles by which my
 conduct has been regulated throughout the whole series of my
 services, as well in Java and Sumatra as in Singapore, have been
 sound and just, and no less consistent with the honour and character

Conclusion. of my Honourable Employers, than conducive to the happiness and improvement of the various classes of society subjected to our rule. The British administration will, I trust, long be revered in Java and respected abroad, for the equity, liberality, and benevolence of its principles ; and in proof of the confidence which it has inspired, I will only refer to the rapidity with which the population of the surrounding countries recently flocked to Singapore at the sight of our flag.

I may notice, that the interests of science and literature have been no less attended to than the moral improvement of the people. In proof of this, I may refer to the spirit of research and inquiry which has been excited in these interesting regions ; to the valuable and important information which has been collected, regarding their history, languages, state of society, &c. ; to the important and extensive collections made in natural history ; and, finally, to the Institutions founded in different parts of the Archipelago. In Java, the revival of the Batavian Society of Arts and Sciences, and the establishment of a Society for the eventual Abolition of Slavery, in an especial manner distinguish the British administration. At Bencoolen a press was introduced, whence several respectable works have issued ; and schools were rapidly extending over the country : and at Singapore, as the more central and commanding (and, I am now happy to say, most permanent) station, an institution has been raised, calculated, if it be honoured with

with the patronage and support of the East-India Company, to afford the means of instruction, and to promote the pursuits of literature and science, on a still more extended scale.

I must entreat your Honourable Court to pardon the length of my representation. I submit it, with every sentiment of respect, for your favourable consideration; and in the hope that, in your liberality, and in the successful termination of the negociation with the Netherlands' Government, some excuse may be found for those proceedings in which I may have outstepped the letter of my commission, and which at the time were marked by your disapprobation. It will at any rate be admitted, that had I quietly remained at Bencoolen, and confined myself to the mere simple discharge of the routine duties of my office, the evils which had so long existed unknown to your Honourable Court might have not only been suffered to continue, but probably to increase. The Dutch Authorities in India might tacitly have been permitted to re-establish their ancient supremacy in the Eastern Archipelago, and the effect not have been discovered or noticed, till it was too late to apply a remedy; whilst, by such a course of silent inactivity, my health would have been spared the trials to which active service has subjected it, and I should have been free from the imputation of a desire to create jealousy towards a nation for which I have reason to entertain feelings of the utmost respect, and against the conduct of whose representative alone I felt it my duty to protest.

I would

Conclusion.

I would not be thought to overrate my services, neither would I wish to appear over jealous of my fair fame ; yet there are circumstances in which a man may be placed, and in which it would ill become him to be silent on the one, or indifferent to the other. It is in this situation that I feel myself compelled to appeal to your Honourable Court. Circumstances have thrown me, in a great measure, out of the ordinary course of your service, and the measures of my administration have become subjects of public notoriety and discussion, even in foreign countries. My only consolation, during a long and arduous service, has been, that eventually, when the whole came under general review, I should be found entitled to the reward of a good and faithful servant. In the most trying situations of my life, in disappointment and misfortunes, even in the hour of your temporary displeasure, this has been my solace ; and now that my services are at an end, if I still cling to this hope, and hesitate to forego it in favour of any personal consideration, I trust that my motives, at least, will not be misunderstood. I hope your Honourable Court will believe that I prize your approval, and the good opinion of my country, far beyond silver or gold. A dreadful and unlooked-for calamity, has in a particular manner thrown me on the bounty of your Honourable Court, and I feel satisfied that, in awarding compensation, the amount will be as consistent with your accustomed liberality, as with the consideration which is due to the rank and stations I have had the honour to hold in your service.

I cannot

I cannot close this representation with greater advantage to Conclusion. myself, or in a manner to ensure it a more favourable reception, than by quoting the opinion of a late highly respected member of your Honourable Court, whose powerful friendship I had experienced, and whose loss I have deeply to deplore. Mr. GRANT, when attending the Lords' Committee on Foreign Trade, on the 6th March 1821, being asked his opinion upon the value of Singapore as a mart for commerce in the East-India Islands, said :

“ I have turned my thoughts to that subject, which I think a very
 “ interesting one, in the relative situation of the British and Nether-
 “ lands powers in the Eastern Seas. I consider the possession of
 “ Singapore, and the occupancy of that place, to be very important
 “ to the British interests ; and I heartily wish it may be found
 “ consistent with the rights of the two nations that Great Britain
 “ may keep possession of it. I think it remarkably well situated
 “ to be a commercial emporium in those seas. I have no doubt it
 “ would very soon rise to great magnitude and importance ; and if
 “ I may be permitted to allude to the conduct of any individual on
 “ this subject, I must say, that I think the whole of the proceedings
 “ of Sir T. S. RAFFLES have been marked with great intelligence
 “ and great zeal for the interests of his country.

“ I remember well being struck with how much has been done in
 “ a very short time at Singapore, both as to the resort of people as
 “ settlers

Conclusion. “settlers and of shipping for trade. It should be remembered, that
“it was quite an unoccupied spot when he took possession of it.”

I have the honour to be,

With the highest respect,

HONOURABLE SIRs,

Your most faithful and obedient Servant,

T. S. RAFFLES.

London,

the 3d November 1824.

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